

Greene Street Historic District
Greene Street from Gordon Highway to
Augusta Canal Bridge
Augusta
Richmond County
Georgia

HABS No. GA-269

HABS,
GA,
123-AUG,
56 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. GA-269

GREENE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Location:

Greene Street between Gordon Highway Overpass and Augusta Canal Bridge, Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia.

USGS Augusta East Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: northeast corner: 17.490190. 3740500; southeast corner: 17.409095. 3704275; northwest corner: 17.410965. 3703750; southwest corner: 17.410865. 3703520.

Present Use:

To be altered by construction of John C. Calhoun Extension.

Significance:

Greene Street is one of the three major thoroughfares that developed in nineteenth century Augusta. It was the site of the original City Hall, constructed in 1820. Several important churches are located on Greene Street, including the Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart and the Charter Baptist Church, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Examples of nineteenth century architecture reflect Greene Street's development as a fashionable residential area. A landscaped median strip unifies the district and imparts a picturesque quality to this unusually wide boulevard. Monuments to citizens of Augusta and the state were erected on the median after 1850, making it a locus of civic pride.

History and Description:

The Greene Street Historic District extends from the overpass of the Gordon Highway, below Fifth Street, on the east, to the Augusta Canal Bridge, above Thirteenth Street, on the west. Greene Street is a landscaped avenue divided by a central median which runs the entire length of the district. It was laid out in the early nineteenth century as one of Augusta's three main streets. It was named for Revolutionary War hero National Greene. The street averages 168 feet in width, and the median averages 45 feet in width. This contrasts with most streets in Augusta which are, on the average, sixty feet wide.

The median was probably originally intended to be open space. Early accounts report sheep grazing there. It is not known when the median was first landscaped, but it is likely that formal design was initiated with the erection of the Walton and Hall monument (now the

Signer's monument) in 1850. Insurance maps indicate that the City Hall, located at sixth and Greene Streets across from this monument, was surrounded by formal planting. In 1979, the median had a central walk and was planted with oak and elm trees, azaleas and grass. Thirteen commemorative monuments were erected on the median between 1850 and 1972, with most erected in the early twentieth century. The sidewalks on either side of Greene Street have borders of trees and grass, and houses are set back from the street.

Greene Street became a fashionable residential area in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Approximately fifty-five brick and frame buildings dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remain on the street. Most are two to three stories in height. The structures display Greek Revival, Gothic and Neo-Gothic and Beaux-Arts styles. There are approximately thirty-five twentieth century intrusions in this historic district, including parking lots, commercial and institutional buildings. Despite these, Greene Street, unified by its central median, retains the sense of spaciousness and elegance created by the nineteenth century development that combined residential and ecclesiastical use with public landscaped space.

Block by Block Description:

Gordon Highway Overpass to fifth Street (400 Block). HABS photos GA-269-1 to GA-269-11

This block has many mid-to-late nineteenth century brick residences. The most prominent structure on the block is the St. James Methodist Episcopal Church at the northeast corner (431 Greene Street, photos GA-269-2 and 3). This brick building with Gothic details was erected in 1856 and enlarged in ca. 1886. A granite obelisk across from the church on the median erected in 1884 commemorates teachers and students of St. James Sunday School and Richmond County soldiers who died in the Civil War. Residences on the block include fine examples of Greek Revival and Second Empire design including the D'Antignac House, constructed in 1856 (GA-268-5); and 448 Greene Street, built in ca 1890 (GA-269-9).

Fifth Street to Sixth Street (500 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-12 to GA-269-22

The original Augusta City Hall and Courthouse stood at the corner of Sixth and Greene Streets from 1820 until its demolition in ca. 1955. It was a federal style building and was surrounded by geometric flower beds. Opposite the site of this building at the center of the median is the Signer's Monument (originally the Walton and Hall Monument), erected in ca. 1850. This obelisk marks the grave of George Walton and Lyman Hall, two of Georgia's three signers of the declaration of Independence. A street was created at the time the monument was erected between Greene Street and Broad Street, Augusta's main commercial thoroughfare running parallel to Greene Street two blocks away. This street is now known as Button Gwinett, named for the third Georgia resident who signed the Declaration of Independence.

At the end of this block, at Sixth Street, is a granite boulder installed in 1932 to commemorate George Washington's 1791 visit to Augusta. Historic structures on this block include 510 Greene Street, the Cullum House, a Colonial Revival structure built in ca. 1910 (GA-269-22); 519 Greene Street, a Greek Revival residence constructed by John Phinizy, an early president of the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company (GA-269-16); and 551 Greene Street, a Second Empire townhouse constructed in ca. 1873. (GA-269-18). The south side of this block is dominated by the eight story modern Municipal Office Building (564 Greene Street) with adjacent parking lots. While less disruptive to the scale of the block, the four story Five Hundred Office Building (509 Greene Street) is major intrusion on the north side of the street.

Sixth Street to Seventh Street (600 Block).

HABS Photos GA-269-23 to GA-269-29

The median between Sixth Street and Seventh Street contains a stone tablet erected 1930 by the Polish Dental and Medical Association of America to commemorate Dr. Paul Fitzsimmons Eve, a surgeon who served in the Polish Revolution. Many of the buildings along this block have been demolished leaving parking lots and vacant lots. The Trailways Bus Depot at 638 Greene Street and its large parking lot is a major intrusion on the south of the street. Historic structures on this block include 619 Greene Street, the Eve House, a frame house on a brick basement with Federal details. Constructed in ca. 1820, this is probably one of the earliest residences built on Greene street (GA-269-25). The First Christian Church and Rectory (633 and 627 Greene Street) were both constructed in ca. 1876. (GA-269-27).

GREENE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
HABS No. GA-269 (Page 4)

Seventh Street to Eight Street (700 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-30 to GA-269-33

Centered in the median on this block is an imposing monument erected in 1913 to honor four Georgia poets: Sidney Lanier, James R. Randall, Paul H. Hayne and Father Abra Ryan. Many of the lots on this block are vacant or contain parking facilities. The major structure is the St. John Methodist Episcopal Church at 736 Greene Street. This Romanesque building was originally constructed in ca. 1844 and altered later in the nineteenth century (GA-269-33).

Eighth Street to Ninth Street (800 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-34 to GA-269-46.

There are three monuments located in the median on this block. The easternmost is a granite block erected in 1913 in honor of brothers of Webbs Lodge who served as Masters of the Grand Lodge of Georgia. A bust of Samuel Hammond, a local Revolutionary War officer, stands on a rough cut base in the center of the block. The third monument, erected in 1942, is a rounded granite tablet with a plaque commemorating local veterans of the Spanish American War. The north side of this block is dominated by parking areas, including the City of Augusta Parking Platform at the corner of Ninth and Greene Streets. The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection at 825 Greene Street is a Neo-Gothic stone structure built in 1926. (GA-269-38, 39 and 40). The Charter Baptist Church (802-816 Greene Street) is on the south side of the street. This elaborate Beaux-Arts domed structure was constructed in 1903 on the site of this congregation's first church, erected in 1820. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (GA-269-41). The south side of Greene Street also includes several nineteenth century structures. Number 828 Greene Street is a small Greek Revival building erected in ca. 1850 (GA-269-42). Number 834 Greene Street has Eastlake details and was constructed in ca. 1890.

Ninth Street to Tenth Street (900 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-47 to GA-269-52

The single monument on this block is a granite shaft surmounted by an eagle erected in 1940 in honor of Richmond County Veterans of World War I. The brick residences on this block include a Greek Revival structure at 913 Greene Street and Italianate structures at 920 and 924 Greene Street, built in ca. 1850 (GA-269-49, 50 and 51). This block also contains the mid-twentieth century Augusta Richmond County Library on the south side, and the four-story Southern Bell Telephone Company building on the north side, detracting from the integrity of the historic district.

GREENE STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
HABS No. GA-269 (Page 5)

Tenth Street to Eleventh Street (1000 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-53 to GA-269-55

The median on this block contains a simple monument erected to Richmond County veterans of World War I and World War II, and a squared shaft with a sculptured fountain dedicated in 1972 to Richmond county veterans of all wars. There are many parking lots and late twentieth century buildings on this block, and little remains of its nineteenth century fabric.

Eleventh Street to Twelfth Street (1100 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-56 to GA-269-60

There are no monuments on this block of the median. Several late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences remain on this block although there are also many parking lots and later structures. The Union Baptist Church at 1102 Greene Street, constructed in ca. 1850, is a fine example of a board and batten Gothic Revival structure (GA-269-60).

Twelfth Street Thirteenth street (1200 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-61 to GA-269-70

An obelisk was erected on the median of this block in 1898 to commemorate poet Richard Henry Wilde. Historic buildings on the block are mostly late nineteenth century frame houses with Queen Anne details, reflecting the fact that this part of Greene Street was the last to develop. The brick house at 1211 Greene Street (GA-269-63) probably dates from ca. 1850.

Thirteenth Street to August Canal (1300 Block).

HABS photos GA-269-71 to GA-269-83

A marble statue of poet James Ryder Randall, a citizen of Augusta at his death in 1908, was erected on this block of the median in 1936. The median terminates at the August Canal. Buildings on this block are similar to the late nineteenth century frame structures on the 1200 block. The prominent church of the Sacred Heart was built on the corner of Thirteenth and Greene Streets in 1894. It is a round-arched Gothic structure with elaborate brick work. The church, deconsecrated in the 1970s, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Prepared by Emily J. Harris
Historic American Buildings
Survey
March 1980

from information compiled by Brian Halterman
Consultant for Historic Augusta, Inc.
March 1979

Project Information

These records are the result of a project undertaken by the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to mitigate the adverse effect of the John C. Calhoun Expressway extension. John A. Burns, AIA, was the HABS project coordinator. The photographs were taken in March 1979 by photographers Douglas K. Parker and Sam Fowler. The written data was prepared by Emily J. Harris, an architectural historian in the HABS office, from information compiled by Bryan M. Halterman, consultant for Historic Augusta, Inc., in March 1980.